

Idaho Principals Academy of Leadership
"Leading and Learning"
Application for Participation in Phase I 2010-2011
Todd Shumway, Principal Melba JR/SR High School

Part I: Summary

As the new principal of Melba JR/SR High School I have been presented with a school in transition and have been asked to wear many hats in this process. Not only do I supervise all of the grade 7-12 teachers and staff members, but I have taken on the development of our new Melba Alternative School which started accepting students a few weeks ago. I handle the 504 plans, head up the Jr. High and High School RTI teams, and supervise all of the JR/SR High athletics, clubs, and student councils. Many responsibilities mean I don't have spare time so my goal planning and delegation of responsibilities has to be focused. As the leader of my building I recognize that I have to make sure that my teachers have what they need to run effective classrooms. As they are a critical component in planning, development of curriculum, and determining student mastery of the standards I believe that empowering them to make decisions is what effective leaders do. Our goal is to develop as a premier school that meets the needs of students and offers a wide variety of educational opportunities.

Part II: Narrative

1. Teacher development and evaluation is critical on a day to day basis if progress is to be made. Being new to this staff I have made it a point to tour around the school regularly to see what things my teachers are doing in classes. Initially, this was done so that they could get used to having me stop by and the students would become more comfortable with my walking through. This also started conversations as I would bring their lesson plans with me to class and would take notes on their classroom interactions and lesson delivery. Currently, I have moved the discussions to planning for curriculum development and have the teachers evaluating their lessons to plan for standards alignment and student mastery.
2. I am fortunate to work with a staff of hard working, dedicated teachers who have set high standards for student achievement and express concern for their students in many ways. When I present the ideas of being more progressive and can show them how these efforts will benefit our students they are good to get onboard and help develop those plans and programs. What I have learned is that if things make sense and all of the stakeholders have input, and see the benefits, then plans move forward.
3. If I am selected for participation in the PALs project it would allow me to expand my network of support and to learn from the experiences of others. As the only secondary principal in my school district, it would be a great benefit to have a network of experienced people to discuss and plan with. With the current educational challenges and probable changes occurring state wide I think this interaction may be what makes the transitions more likely to succeed.
4. I would expect this opportunity to help me learn from the experiences of others, to discover ways of improving my school, and developing personal leadership qualities.